Radiological Safety Guidelines for Support Services Personnel

Revision Date: 06/14/23

Applies To: Support Services personnel needing to enter posted (radioactive material) laboratories, facilities, or patient rooms, or servicing items or areas containing radioactive materials/contamination.

Contact Numbers:
Environment, Health & Safety, Radiation Safety Service (RSS)
(734) 647-1143 between 7:30 am-4:30 pm weekdays

University of Michigan (U-M), Department of Public Safety and Security (DPSS)
(734) 763-1131 after 4:30 pm and on weekends/holidays

This document provides radiological safety guidelines for entry into (including maintenance and cleaning of) posted laboratories, facilities, or patient rooms at U-M, or servicing items or areas potentially containing radioactive materials or contamination. All Support Services personnel performing this work must read and acknowledge that they understand and will follow these instructions.

General Safety

- **Be alert** to radiation or other warning signs. Review any warning signs, postings, and labels, and ask for assistance from your supervisor and/or RSS personnel, if necessary.
- **Do not** clean, touch, disturb, or relocate items labeled with radioactive material warning tape or labels; these items are potentially contaminated.
- **Do not** bring personal belongings (radios, coats, etc.) into posted laboratories, facilities, or patient rooms, where the risk of radioactive contamination exists.
- **Do not** eat, drink, smoke, or apply cosmetics in posted laboratories, facilities, or patient rooms.
- **Do not** store food or beverages in refrigerators, freezers, or walk-in cold rooms used to store radioactive or hazardous materials.
- **Wear** appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the activity (e.g., gloves, shoe covers, gown/coveralls, safety glasses, face shield), especially if handling or in contact with items, equipment, or materials (including sewage) that are suspected to be contaminated by radioactive material; appropriate PPE may include gloves, apron or coveralls, and safety glasses or a face shield (if contamination of the face is possible). Consult RSS about appropriate PPE, if needed.
- **Wash hands** frequently with soap and warm water during work shifts in which you enter posted laboratories, facilities, or patient rooms. Wash hands before taking a break, eating, or smoking, and after work involving contact with potentially contaminated items or waste.

Responding to Suspected or Identified Contamination

- **Do not** attempt to clean up a radioactive spill. Immediately contact your supervisor, RSS, and/or DPSS if you identify a spill or are involved in a contamination incident.
- **Immediately contact your supervisor** and/or RSS if you suspect you may have become contaminated with radioactive material. **Do not leave** the area until surveyed and authorized by RSS personnel. Use the lab phone, to prevent the spread of radioactive contamination.
• **Follow instructions** from your supervisor, laboratory/facility personnel, or RSS if personnel, area, or equipment contamination is identified or suspected.

**Instructions for Safe Cleaning, Handling, and Maintenance**

• **Do not** mop or sweep floors if radioactive contamination is identified or suspected, or if informed not to do so by laboratory or RSS personnel.
• **Do not** attempt to clean: laboratory bench tops, research equipment, sinks, exhaust hoods, refrigerators/freezers used to store radioactive or hazardous materials, and floor areas where lab chemicals or radioactive materials are stored.
• Clean only windowsills, vertical surfaces, and floor areas (if not labeled with radiation warning tape and/or covered with plastic, blue pads, Plexiglas, wood, lead, etc.).
• **Do not** clean, touch, disturb, or relocate items labeled with radioactive material warning tape or labels; these items are potentially contaminated.
• **Do not** clean, move, or relocate laboratory equipment or radiation shielding (Plexiglas, lead, etc.); these items could be contaminated. Request that lab personnel relocate these items, if necessary.
• **Do not** clean, move, relocate, or handle radioactive waste containers: radioactive-labeled yellow fiber drums, plastic jugs or carboys, or 5-gallon white buckets. All waste containers should be properly labeled or stenciled with yellow and magenta/purple colors.
• **Schedule in advance** special projects or cleanings (floor stripping, washing, waxing, buffing, etc.) with the Authorized User or lab/unit personnel. Lab personnel may need to relocate radioactive material or waste.
• **Be careful** not to hit, knock, tip, or spill a container of radioactive/hazardous material with custodial equipment (mops/brooms/cords/etc.).
• **Do not** drag extension cords across laboratory bench tops.
• **Notify** RSS if personnel contamination (clothing or skin) is suspected during a job. RSS will advise if potentially contaminated clothing should be laundered, held for decay, or disposed as radioactive waste.

**Waste and Trash**

• **Do not** empty or discard radioactive material into normal trash.
• **Do not** collect or empty normal trash if you notice any cardboard or Styrofoam boxes, test-tubes, glassware, absorbent pads, or other items labeled with the radiation symbol, radioactive material tape, or the wording "Caution Radioactive Material." Leave such containers in room and notify your custodial supervisor and/or RSS as soon as possible.
• **Do not** discard or otherwise release potentially contaminated items/materials (e.g., used sewage pipe) without survey and clearance by RSS.

**NOTE:** RSS may need to decontaminate, hold for decay, or dispose of custodial or maintenance equipment that is contaminated.

**Security**

• **Secure laboratory doors** whenever a posted laboratory or facility is to be left unattended after-hours. Close and lock doors when leaving.

**Revision History**

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